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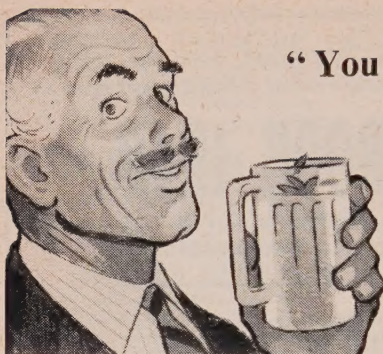
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# THEATRE WORLD

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Picture by Maurice Seymour, Chicago

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Edited by Frances Stephens

## April 1949

A SUDDEN spate of new plays came to the West End in the second half of March, many of which are not reviewed in this issue. They include Terence Rattigan's *Adventure Story* at the St. James's, a most impressive play about Alexander the Great, which finds this leading playwright in an unaccustomed philosophic mood. On 19th March Frances Day returned to the West End in *Latin Quarter*, a Continental musical in which the popular Georges Guetary is also appearing. Variety came back to the Palladium on the 21st, with Eleanor Powell as the latest visitor from America.

*Belinda Fair*, a new musical romance by Eric Maschwitz and Gordon Lennox, with music by Jack Strachey, opened at the Saville on the 25th, with Adele Dixon leading a cast of forty. Other new plays include *Summer in December*, at the Comedy on the 22nd; *Daphne Laureola*, a new play by James Bridie, in which Laurence Olivier is presenting Edith Evans, at Wyndham's, on the 23rd; *A Woman's Place*, at the Vaudeville on the 24th, with Leslie Banks, Elizabeth Allan and Kathleen Harrison in the leads, and *The Queen Came By*, by R. F. Delderfield (author of *Worm's Eye View*) at the Duke of York's on the 30th. There were revivals of Maugham's *Caroline* at the Arts on the 22nd, and *They Walk Alone* (with Freda Jackson) at the Embassy on the same night.

March also saw the arrival of Mariemma, the Spanish dancer, at the Princes on the 21st, and the opening of the season of Indian dancing at St. Martin's, led by Mrinalini Sarabhai, the first woman Indian dancer to bring a company to this country.

There were two dismal failures in the last

## Over the Footlights

month, *Love's a Funny Thing* and *Sweethearts and Wives*, the former being withdrawn after only three performances, a post-war record in the West End.

A very encouraging fact has been the undoubted success of Donald Wolfit's Shakespeare season at the Bedford Theatre, Camden Town. Few could have foreseen that the public would be attracted to this outlying spot, but Mr. Wolfit's faith has been more than justified, and there is talk that the Bedford may become his company's permanent home. Once again Wolfit's *Lear* has been acclaimed as an outstanding performance, and news comes that on 4th April, for two weeks, Joseph O'Connor, a most promising member of the company, is to appear as Hamlet with Rosalind Idon as Ophelia and David Tearle as King Claudius, Donald Wolfit himself playing the part of the Gravedigger. *Othello* will follow *Hamlet* on 18th April for two weeks, with Donald Wolfit and Joseph O'Connor alternating in the roles of Othello and Iago.

The revival of *Lilac Time* has delighted present day theatregoers and is to move to the Palace on 25th April. Meantime *Brigadoon*, the American musical, will have moved into His Majesty's in mid-April.

The Covent Garden Opera Company are to present in German two complete cycles of Wagner's *Der Ring Des Nibelungen* and two performances of *Tristan und Isolde*. These, the first complete cycles of the *Ring* to be given in Europe since the war, will take place between 12th May and 16th June.

The artists appearing include Kirsten Flagstad, Set Svanholm, Hans Hotter and Peter Klein.

F.S.

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# New Shows of the Month

"The Compelled People"—New Lindsey, 21st Feb.  
 "The Foolish Gentlewoman"—Duchess, 23rd Feb.  
 "Lilac Time"—His Majesty's, 24th Feb.  
 "The Unquiet Spirit"—Arts, 24th Feb.  
 "Desert Highway"—Boltons, 25th Feb.  
 "Much Ado About Nothing"—Bedford, 28th Feb.  
 "King Lear"—Bedford, 7th Mar.  
 "The Unquiet Spirit"—Arts, 24th Feb.  
 "Caligula"—Embassy, 8th Mar.  
 "Dark of the Moon"—Lyric, Hammersmith, 9th Mar.  
 "The Merry Wives of Windsor"—Bedford, 14th Mar.  
 "Triangle"—Torch, 15th Mar.

## "The Compelled People"

THIS new play by Lionel Birch and Lorna Hay, takes us in imagination to Berlin. There is no question of that; we feel we are there; and the time is next July. The two principal characters are native Berliners, brother and sister, and questions of loyalty are raised, but the theme is really the Tchekovian one of indecision. Always there and often voiced, is the urgent question, shall they fly literally away or stick it out? In the end, the brother, ageing, weary and unoccupied, goes. The sister, who is younger and, as an actress, has many engagements, refuses her chances and stays on alone.

Ernest Milton gave a memorable performance as the brother, a man of sensibility, experience and culture. His weary inflexions delicately pointed the rather literary colloquialisms of his lines, and the strain of life under the "Air Lift" was eloquent in his face and in the creases in his garments. As the sister, Rosalie Crutchley gave an admirably sensitive portrayal of a woman whose youthful ardour was being exhausted too soon by that same strain. The authors and Robert Henderson, who directed, succeeded in conveying the painful ideas of insecurity and espionage. Only pleasant-mannered people appear, but most of them are agents, or are suspected of being agents, of some vast political power.

All characters appeared to have no makeup. This and the intimacy imposed by space restriction gave extraordinary actuality to the proceedings. When the Russian captain chased the maid, we watched with guilty fascination because we felt that these people did not know that they were being watched. One wonders how this effect of intimate reality could be transferred to a larger theatre, because there must be few people in Europe or America who would not be keenly interested in the play.

H.G.M.

## "The Foolish Gentlewoman"

A VERY human play this, written by an author who knows how to breathe life into her characters, and how to use the complicated apparatus of the theatre to an astonishingly simple and convincing end. Margery Sharp has invested her work with much shrewd insight and gentle humour, but was not afraid to wring our hearts with a piece of real tragedy, all the more poignant because of its subtlety and essential possibility.

Isabel Brocken, an altogether charming and gracious widow of middle age—"the foolish gentlewoman" of the title—is stung by a sermon, far too late, to repent of a mean girlhood act by which Tilly Cuff, a poor relation, was cheated out of a proposal of marriage. Isabel blithely seeks to make restitution by giving Tilly her fortune, and to that end invites her to her house, not realising what the passing of many barren years can do to a spinster eking out a resentful existence as companion to tyrannical rich old ladies. Tilly Cuff, in short, has become an impossible person from whom one would run a mile, but for all that, we cannot help but suffer for her intensely when she learns of Isabel's shabby trick and the realisation of what might have been suddenly floods over her.

This is the pith of the story, though the inevitable twist at the end is what matters most. As Isabel and Tilly, Sybil Thorndike and Mary Merrall are magnificently contrasted, and brilliantly in tune with the subtler psychological reactions. Dame Sybil has never been more radiant, nor Miss Merrall more ruthlessly faded and embittered. Lewis Casson as Isabel's shrewd solicitor brother-in-law, is the acme of horse sense, and two interpolated characters in the shape of a simple-minded Cockney house-keeper and her "fey" daughter, have their part to play in pointing Miss Sharp's moral, which is not to be eluded by the discerning. As these two, Mona Washbourne and Eleanore Bryan are quite outstanding. Isabel Dean and Nigel Green provide the arguments of modern youth, and Enid Lindsay a comforting picture of a sensible woman tackling the misfortunes of life to some purpose.

F.S.

## "Lilac Time"

THE rapturous welcome given by a packed first night audience at His Majesty's Theatre to Emile Littler's revival of *Lilac Time* paid tribute to Schubert's immortal

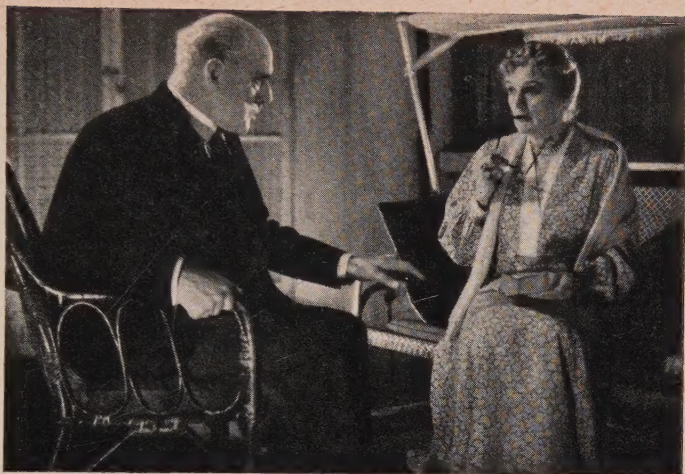
(Continued on page 8)



(Right):

Mr. Brocken (Lewis Casson): You behaved very badly.

Isabel Brocken (Sybil Thorndike), tells her brother - in - law of the shabby trick she played many years ago on Tilly Cuff, a poor relation.



(Below):

Tilly (Mary Merrall): I'm glad to have made a joke, personally I didn't see it.

An amusing moment from Act II.



## "The Foolish Gentlewoman"

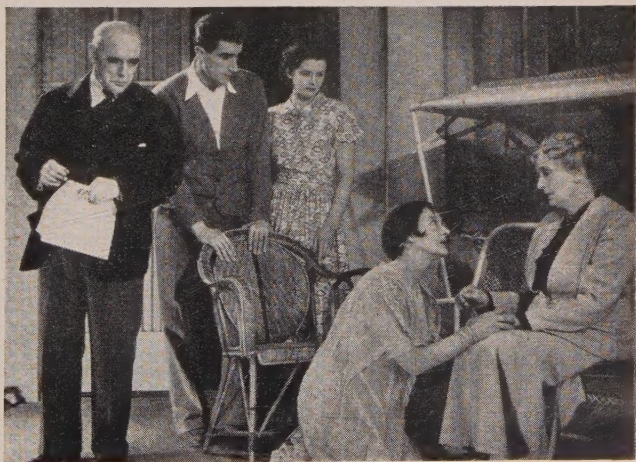
● Scenes from the London Mask Theatre Company's latest play, by Margery Sharp, produced by Michael Macowan at the Duchess Theatre. Voted one of the most delightful plays London has seen of late, the Company is brilliantly led by Sybil Thorndike, Lewis Casson and Mary Merrall.

(Right):

Tilly: I shan't mind anything, so long as we're together.

The moving scene towards the end of the play.

(Centre: Nigel Green as Humphrey Garrett, and Isabel Dean as Jacqueline Brown.)



PICTURES

BY

HOUSTON-ROGERS



melodies, Doris Zinkeisen's pleasing decor, and a well-drilled company's high spirited performance matching the gaiety that was Vienna when the world was young.

Celia Lipton plays and sings the part of Lili with freshness and charm, and with sufficient coyness to lend credence to the bewilderment of a shy Franz Schubert (John Lewis), who, like Cyrano de Bergerac, could only compose the language and music of love, leaving their delivery to a more personable and accomplished performer. With the natural result. Not for Schubert, however, the poignancy of Cyrano's renunciation: here is only comedy brushed ever so lightly with the smiling wistfulness of the "never-could-be."

Played by Bruce Trent, Baron von Schober, the successful suitor, is as gallant a figure as ever won a maiden's heart, and his singing virile and debonair. John Lewis plays the exacting part of the musician with gentle self-effacement, but gives full rein to his vocal powers and emotional resources in the solo, "Dream Enthralling," and his two duets with Lili, "The Golden Song" and "The Flower."

Bernard Ansell's portrayal of Christian Veit, father of Lili and her two sisters, is rich and ripe, and his duet with Rita Varian (Mrs. Veit) deliciously sentimental. Enid Lowe's skittish Marini, prima ballerina, is a polished gem of acting in character and period.

A special word of thanks is due for the colourful harmony of dresses, scenery, and all stage effects, and for the handling of the ensemble, particularly on the rise of the curtain in Act 2. W.B.C.

### "The Unquiet Spirit"

IN a final analysis, it can be argued, every artist has but one theme that wholly possesses him. In *The Unquiet Spirit*, Jean-Jacques Bernard again says to us, "Be very quiet and I will show you how sad life is for a woman who has everything that life can give her. That is not enough, you see. Want, longing, there must be, for fine natures. Think of the exquisite agony of mind suffered by those who do not know for what they long." Well, all love stories are stories of separation. In the *Evangeline* class, we are tortured by the thought of two lovers, who have been separated, continually drawing towards each other and each time missing that meeting for which they ache. M. Bernard carries this a stage further. "Suppose," says he, "they had never been united in the first place, what then? They would search for each other through life, not knowing what they wanted." Thus we owe to M. Bernard a highly poetic explanation for a lot of tiresome conduct.

The play was produced by John Fernald. The unhappy lady was played with low

(Continued on page 10)

### "Carmen" at Sadler's Wells

IN Tyrone Guthrie's hands *Carmen* is sure to escape dullness. For its restoration to the Sadler's Wells repertory in February he staged an interpretation of Bizet's opera which was interesting, challenging, alive, yet not wholly successful.

His resource in production was manifest in the groupings of the cast, the bold depiction of a factory girl chorus, his unorthodox treatment of Act 4 in Escamillo's dressing room. Many other details showed his skilful mind, but not all were in harmony.

Principal issue lay between producer and scenery and costume designer, Reginald Woodley. Concerned no doubt to depict Spain as a land of sunshine and squalor, the result was an evening of excessive visual gloom. Black and grey, a dark stage, predominated.

The costuming was conceived as a matter of contrasts—white military uniforms against black civilian apparel, the girls given some chance of colour in Act 4, but the complete picture overshadowed by an enormous black background. This following the grey setting of Act 1, the darkness of the tavern scene in Act 2, and the mountain rendezvous at night of Act 3, set a sombre hue for the opera which might be Spain, but suggested Manchester and not Seville.

Escamillo's first entrance in Act 2 was a typical clash. He entered the tavern group arrayed in a white suit and bowlerish hat which showed flamboyant spirit, but also recalled the Old Kent Road. We were not, at that moment, unquestionably in Spain. The spiv's barrow was not far away.

What gave the evening its warmth and fair measure of success? The innate vigour of Bizet, the Wells standard of singing and acting, the aliveness of the whole company in an opera which is not easily subdued by blacks and greys.

James Johnston brought to Jose a voice and acting range which filled the part and the stage. His producer took a chance with the bottle and drunkenness in Act 4 that missed its target, atoned for in the final moment of the death scene when he and Carmen settled all issues.

With Roderick Jones as Escamillo there was a vigour and life in the male contestants that overshadowed Anna Pollak's neat little Carmen. She sang well and moved gracefully, but of gypsy fire and abandon there was little trace. Minnie Bower fully earned the warm applause for her Micaela.

Was it first night nerves which caused the raggedness in the orchestra, especially with the wind? Probably so, and with that tension relieved Michael Mudie will have other chances to show that Bizet's music and the company's clear singing will attract big audiences to a Carmen in somewhat sombre garb. F.J.D.



# "The Human Touch"

● Scenes from the play by J. Lee Thompson and Dudley Leslie, which tells the story of Dr. James Young Simpson (the discoverer of chloroform) at the beginning of his long and distinguished career, in 1847. In the picture on the right are seen David Cole as the doctor's young son, Alec Guinness as Dr. Simpson and Sophie Stewart as his wife.



## PICTURES

BY

ANGUS McBEAN



A dramatic scene between Professor Syme (John Laurie) and Dr. Simpson. The Professor, in common with the other leading medical men in Edinburgh, is strongly opposed to Dr. Simpson's use of his newly discovered anæsthetic.



voice and tremendous nervous attack by Margaret Rawlings, who made the piece tolerable and the last act exciting. William Mervyn won our sympathy for the long-suffering husband, and Jenny Laird brought briefly and beautifully to life another lady in the story, whose sad plight seemed to us more important than the main plot.

H.G.M.

### "Desert Highway"

**T**HE revival of J. B. Priestley's *Desert Highway* at the Boltons is an excellent one. People who missed it during its limited original production can be speeded to Kensington with confidence, for the fine acting team includes two players in their original parts—John Wyse as Corporal Donnington and Stanley Rose as Trooper Elvin. It is a war play—any war—and there is an all male cast. One must say it is a sermon, but a sermon very well set out with imaginative wealth of illustration, and the world will be in a worse mess than it is in at present when there is no longer a public for sermons. Here there is no text given out and no moral drawn, but we are presented with six individuals, pure in heart if not in speech, blindly groping for a meaning in life. The individuals are good; the Creator is good; yet the world is rotten. This mysterious and unpleasant result is taken to be due to selfishness, wickedness and stupidity on a high but never clearly indicated human level. We are beginning to doubt this. Act II shows us that things were the same 2,000 years ago and, although the author does not seem to draw it, there is an inference that things will be the same 2,000 years hence. The only thing for it seems to be to carry on individually and let events evoke the courage needed to endure them.

John Wyse gives significant and musical expression to the doubt and questing near despair of Corporal Donnington. Douglas Wilmer makes the Jewish Sergeant an impressive figure, especially in the second act, where he seems to assume apocalyptic fervour. The difficult part of the boy is well sustained by Owen Holder. Stanley Rose repeats his success in the part of "Knocker" Elvin. Lionel Stevens and Anthony Cundell present the superficial characteristics and suggest the accompanying underlying qualities associated in the popular mind with Yorkshire and Wales respectively.

H.G.M.

### "King Lear"—"Much Ado About Nothing"—"The Merry Wives of Windsor"

**D**ONALD Wolfitt is well established at the Bedford Theatre and, we are glad to note, is planning to remain there until summer, adding some of Bernard Shaw's plays to his already extensive repertoire.

From this, hopes may begin to stir that the spirit that once impelled pilgrims down the Waterloo Road may revive to establish a shrine in Camden Town.

Of the March productions, *King Lear* was naturally outstanding. That Donald Wolfitt's *Lear* is magnificent is generally agreed. (In the history of the English stage, of how few actors might that have been said.) It is an impersonation that never relaxes its grip on the audience, who find themselves transported, strangely moved and "rapt withal." Perhaps, during the storm, the spell loses some of its potency. Stage thunder and lightning are effective reminders to us of where we are. Many members of the supporting company, of course, quite fail to move but most of the important parts were well taken. Joseph O'Connor's Edmund and Ronald Grierson's Gloucester commanded respect and Bryan Johnson and Jonathan Meddings acted with grace and conviction as, respectively, the Fool and Edgar.

*Much Ado About Nothing* ran merrily along and was well dressed. Donald Wolfitt and Rosalind Iden, by their tones and looks, added the no longer obvious meaning to the antiquated banter that passes between Benedick and Beatrice. Claudio's passionate repudiation of that patient, demonstrable chattel, Hero, was carried off with the necessary impetuosity by Bryan Johnson, with Joseph O'Connor's princely Pedro to keep him in countenance. The important scene follows wherein Beatrice induces Benedick to call Claudio to account in a duel and Rosalind Iden was complete in this. Coquetry gave way to grief and the words, "Kill Claudio," though still coming as a surprise, did not seem inconsistent. Dogberry was miscast, and the Watch scenes did not quite come off.

That complaint one so often hears about actors, that they are always the same, whatever the part, cannot be made about Donald Wolfitt. He is a real actor and it is difficult to peer through the make-up to the man. As Falstaff, in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, he presented a monstrous ripe old fruit, a kind of dissolute Father Christmas, a Bacchic monument from the Old World. The company vigorously attacked and were generously applauded. Besides Falstaff, the wives and their husbands were well played, so too were Shallow, Slender and Dr. Caius. Not a bad reckoning, all things considered. The rest were of poor quality but they had variety and served well to make up the cry.

How good to hear an orchestra in a theatre! Here is a pleasant one under the direction of Hilda Winnett. And Rosabel Watson arranges the music.

H.G.M.

### "Caligula"

**S**INCE the name of Albert Camus is not without honour in France, we are obliged to all concerned for the opportunity





### "Mandragola"

Picture:  
Roger Wood

A scene from the riotously successful Machiavelli comedy now past its 50th performance at the Mercury Theatre. The Mercury, now in its nineteenth year, is London's smallest public theatre and *Mandragola* with a perfect cast including Hugh Griffith, Michael Goodliffe, William Fox, Geoffrey Dunn and Patricia Hilliard, and many delightful songs, is proving highly popular.

here given to see a sample of his work. *Caligula* has been translated by Stuart Gilbert and produced by Alexis Solomos.

What most people remember about the Emperor Caligula is that he ennobled his horse and violated his sister. Neither of these objects of his attention are introduced into the play, which is presumed to commence directly after Drusilla's death. Indeed, if we wish to be kind, we can take grief occasioned by the death of his sister Drusilla as the key to his mind and subsequent conduct, which was uniformly and tediously cruel and vicious. That mad dogs should be destroyed is regarded as axiomatic by Anglo-Saxons. Should they be grateful if one trouble lengthily and expensively to prove them right? In this play, Caligula is presented as a disgusting young sadist, talking balderdash about the moon. His trouble, we are told, was that he had "too much soul." Such an explanation can be taken as profound or absurd, as one pleases, and this may be said of much more of the play. To present even Caligula tolerably on a stage would require more soul, not less. Whatever the historical Caligula may have been, a stage representation of him should have extraordinary magnetic power. Michael Yannis did not give this impression, although he seemed adequate to the script. The Emperor seemed to maintain his position, not by power of any positive quality in himself, but because of the most unnatural forbearance on the part of those surrounding him—a forbearance as shocking as his own outrageous conduct. We must here credit the play with a modern political significance,

which people in an occupied country would not be slow to appreciate.

One would like to get into sympathy with some aspect of the work. Laurence Payne, fortunate enough to have a part that seemed to correspond to what we like to think is normal, was always a welcome sight. Leonard Sachs, cool and relaxed, seemed to treat the Imperial lunatic with wary indulgence. This, too, was understandable. Mary Morris relieved the strain, for she could not withhold her charm and distinction from the part of Caesonia, the Emperor's mistress and active apologist, whom he finally, of course, murders.

Most of the choreography was pretentious and dull, but it had its bright moments.

H.G.M.

### "Dark of the Moon"

**I**N a way this strange unaccountable fantasy defies description. To say it is a compound of smoky mountain witches, hot gosselling and hill-billy songs is true enough, but it has in addition an attraction of gripping intensity which grows as the evening wears on. From being at first slightly bewildered one is irresistibly drawn in spite of one's better judgment, until identity with all the primitive happenings on the stage is utterly complete. It is good news that this exciting piece of theatre is coming to the West End proper.

*Dark of the Moon*, by the American authors Howard Richardson and William Berney, is inspired by the ballad *Barbara Allen*:

(Continued overleaf)



*A witch boy from the mountain came,  
A pinin' to be human,  
Fer he had seen the fairest gal . . .  
A gal named Barbara Allen.*

The witch boy gets his girl, but if he is to remain human, she must be faithful to him for a year. In two acts and nine scenes, we learn how Barbara Allen loses her witch boy and her life, and glimpse something of the simple superstitious lives of the American backwood farming folk, in sequences that are half reality, half allegory. There is plenty of native wit in the American idiom.

A work as elusive as this demands a touch of genius on the production side. Peter Brook has excelled beyond one's wildest dreams, both in the scenes on the weird moonlit ridge, home of the Conjur Man and Woman, and their attendant witches, and down among the valley folk, in their village store and at their village dances, but most of all in two powerful scenes, where Barbara Allen gives birth to a monstrosity, and in the revivalist meeting, where clever groupings and significant lighting bring a horror to the religious frenzy spelling doom for Barbara Allen, which far exceeds the nameless horror on the moon-bathed witches' ridge.

In a company which rises magnificently to the producer's exacting demands, glowing tribute is due to Sheila Burrell for her

beautifully clear cut rendering of red-headed Barbara Allen; to William Sylvester for his skill in turning the witch boy into a human; to Craddock Munro for his Preacher Haggler and Joan Young for her doubling of the roles of Conjur Woman and Mrs. Allen, and to a dozen others for their spirited portrayal of the ordinary folk. The settings by Gurschner and Moore are most effective, but perhaps in the end the major triumph for an inspired interpretation is Peter Brook's.

F.S.

### "Triangle"

THE Company of Cousins presented three one-act plays by Stuart Sebastian, whom they described as "a young playwright of exceptional promise, well-known in London society." This would impress Bill Crichton. It is further stated that a new play about Oscar Wilde is in preparation by this author. Before this undertaking is carried out, the Cousins will produce *Romeo and Juliet* in modern dress. The three short plays provided slight indication of how this movement may develop, but they were quite good fun. The best feature of the entertainment was the acting of George Cormack, who provided three interesting character studies.

H.G.M.

(Continued on page 30)

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PICTURES BY  
ANGUS McBEAN

LAURENCE  
OLIVIER  
as  
Chorus



THE OLD VIC THEATRE COMPANY IN

“*Antigone*”

**L**AURENCE Olivier's production of Jean Anouilh's provocative play proved the season's most stimulating experience. The translation from the French by Lewis Galantière is brilliant, a model of dramatic English verse in the idiomatic vein. The original Greek play is strictly adhered to only so far as the philosophical argument of expediency versus idealism is concerned, though inexorable Fate works in the true Sophoclean manner.

The company rise to the opportunities of this long and fruitful argument in magnificent style, inspired at the outset by Laurence Olivier's brilliant preamble. Vivien Leigh

reveals with unswerving firmness and dignity Antigone's ordeal to the death in support of a moral principle, while George Relph is magnificent as Creon, the statesman who is ruled by political opportunism.

The atmosphere of the play is further enhanced by the austere Greek setting of Roger Ramsdell, and by the costumes by Sophie Harris, which are modern but symbolic.

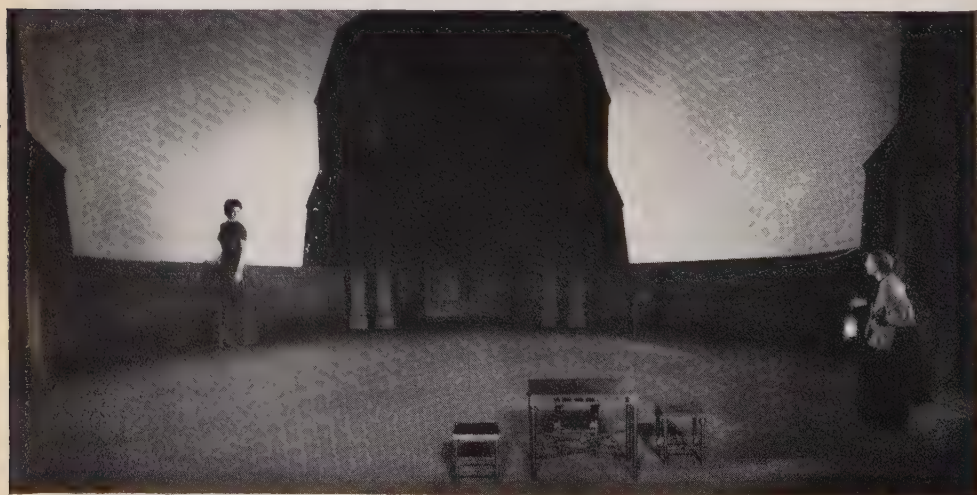
Very wisely *Antigone* is produced to run without an interval and to add lightness to the evening's entertainment Sir Laurence has added a delightful curtain raiser in Chekov's *The Proposal*.





Laurence Olivier, as The Chorus, introduces the audience to the chief players in the tragedy. They are, *L. to R.*, George Cooper, Hugh Stewart and Thomas Heathcote as the Guards, Vivien Leigh as Antigone, George Relph as Creon, Michael Redington as Page, Helen Beck as Eurydice, Eileen Beldon as the Nurse, Dan Cunningham as Haemon, Meg Maxwell as Ismene and Terence Morgan as the Messenger.

(Below): The Nurse finds Antigone alone late at night and begs her to go to bed.







The Nurse does not suspect that Antigone has determined to bury the body of her brother, Polynices. Antigone is the child of Oedipus and Jocasta, and her two brothers had led to a revolt which Creon, their uncle, had suppressed. By Greek tradition Polynices' body is left unburied as a warning to the populace.

*(Above right):*

Antigone with Ismene, her sister, who lacks Antigone's courage and single-mindedness of purpose and is appalled when she hears of her sister's intention.

*(Right):*

Antigone and Haemon, her lover. He is the son of Creon, and Antigone knows full well that if she disobeys her uncle's edict she risks death and the loss of a beloved husband.







*(Left):*

The long and dramatic scene between Antigone and Creon after the former has made her first abortive attempt to bury her brother's body, which lies exposed outside the city. Creon uses his subtlest means to dissuade his niece from her folly, even to the argument that the corpse is most likely that of her other and hated brother Eteocles. Whatever his personal feelings, his dilemma is real as head of the State, and he has no alternative but to warn her that death awaits her if she attempts the burial again. Antigone's stand is that of the individual against the State. It becomes obvious that she will not abandon the moral principle she is upholding.



Antigone is captured by the guards during her second feverish attempt to bury her brother's body and is brought handcuffed to the Palace.



(Above): While waiting under arrest Antigone talks freely with her guard. Inevitable Fate begins her work and (above right) Antigone, her stoicism unshaken, prepares for the terrible death that awaits her.

(Thomas Heathcote as the Guard)

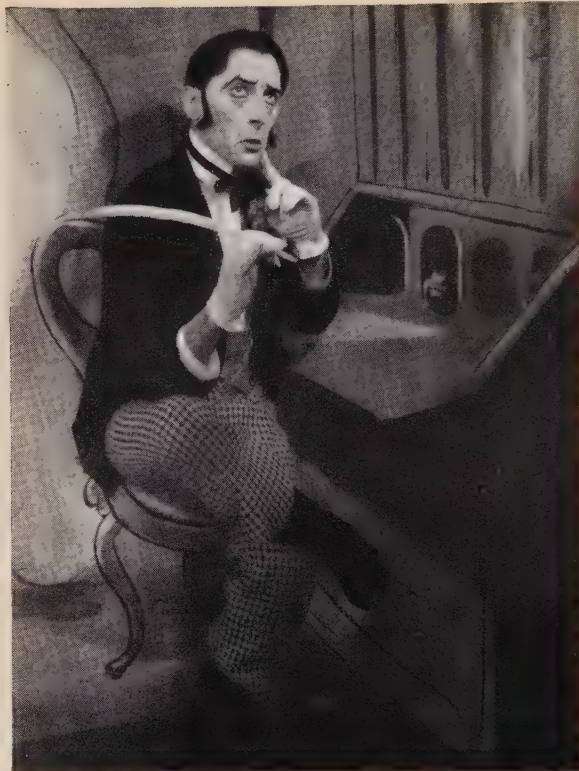
(Right):

The Chorus comments on the overwhelming tragedies which follow Creon's adherence to his edict and Antigone's determination not to be browbeaten.



The closing moments of the play.





# “The Proposal”

● It was a happy thought to include Chekhov's "Jest in One Act" as a curtain raiser to *Antigone*, and judging by the sustained laughter which greets this delightful piece of nonsense, the audiences at the New agree heartily. The play is given in Constance Garnett's translation, and Laurence Olivier's production is a triumph of speed. Not the least attractive is Roger Furse's gay decor, while the three players taking part bring an unusual sense of timing and refreshing verve to their interpretation.

(Left):

Peter Cushing as Ivan Vassilyevitch Lomov, in which role he reveals himself as a comedian of outstanding gifts. Note that the chair is merely part of the painted backcloth.



PICTURES BY  
ANGUS McBEAN

(Left):

Lomov calls on his neighbour in a state of agitation, bent on proposing to his daughter. When Stepan Stepanovitch Tchubukov eventually discovers Lomov's intention he is delighted.

(Derrick Penley as Stepan Stepanovitch Tchubukov.)

*(Right):*

All does not go well with the proposal. At first Natalya Stepanovna misunderstands the purpose of the young man's visit, and a fierce argument ensues over the rightful ownership of a neighbouring meadow. Lomov's weak heart almost gives way under the strain of the heated quarrel which follows.

(Peggy Simpson as Natalya Stepanovna.)



*(Left):*

Now it is Natalya's turn to collapse. Once again note how gracefully Mr. Furse's painted furniture is brought into use.

*(Right):*

At last the couple reach an amicable frame of mind, to the obvious great relief of Stepan Stepanovitch Tchubukov.







### LAURENCE OLIVIER AND VIVIEN LEIGH

● The present Old Vic Theatre Company's season at the New Theatre marks the first occasion on which Laurence Olivier and his wife have appeared together on the West End stage. Both have had a tremendous reception, and in addition to *Antigone*, they are of course to be seen also in *Richard III* and in *The School for Scandal*. Below left: A study of Laurence Olivier as Richard III, which many hold to be his greatest acting achievement, and, right, Vivien Leigh as Lady Teazle.

(Portrait by Angus McBean)



John Vickers



Vivienne

# Tale of Two Cities

by ERIC JOHNS

**A**CTORS, authors and their plays are always breaking records of some kind. One gets tired of reading about them as they leap into the gossip columns, either in self-glorification or as a means of boosting business at the particular theatre where they happen to be appearing. Usually such records are not even a nine days' wonder. They are forgotten overnight.

Exceptions always crop up, of course, and Peggy Ashcroft happens to be one of them. Two summers ago she gave us the greatest acting achievement of her career as Lady Holt in *Edward, My Son*. Her sensitive and masterly handling of the drunken scene is something never to be forgotten by those fortunate enough to have witnessed it. New York clamoured for the play, and they wanted Peggy Ashcroft as well. So in company with Robert Morley she crossed the Atlantic and gave a poor Broadway season its one blazing triumph last September. Now she is back in our midst, playing the title-role in *The Heiress* at the Haymarket, thereby dimming even those vivid memories of her Lady Holt. For the first time in her career she plays a plain unloved heroine, who is a disappointment to her father and an embarrassment to her friends, on account of her gauche, hypersensitive behaviour. Who can ever forget the plaintive cry of this unwanted girl, as she sobs, "Someone *must* love me!"? Small wonder the Haymarket "House Full" boards are displayed so frequently against the scarlet pillars of that elegant portico.

Miss Ashcroft has surely established a novel record by launching a play successfully in London, then leaving the cast to repeat her triumph in New York and finally returning to London in a new part while the two previous productions continue to play to sell-out business. It makes one wonder if there really is so very much difference between the theatre in London and New York.

"I can only speak of *Edward, My Son*," observed Miss Ashcroft, "as my only other appearance on Broadway was in *High Tor* at the Martin Beck Theatre, to which curiously enough, I was to return in *Edward* more than ten years later. Our play went off with more of a bang in New York. At His Majesty's it was not a smash-hit overnight, as we opened in the middle of a prolonged and business-killing heat-wave. We had to gradually cultivate success in London and build up to a steady long run. Such a situation would be impossible in New York, where, if a play hopes to run, it must be an immediate success.



PEGGY ASHCROFT

(Portrait by Vivienne)

"Production costs on Broadway are so fantastic that any play which hopes to survive must do enormous business right from the opening night, and then maintain the pace. As soon as it shows signs of waning, it has to be whipped off. There is no question of nursing a possible success, as happens in the West End, where plays of promise sometimes play to half-empty houses for a week or two until they find their feet and eventually pay handsome dividends to those who had faith and were prepared to lose money until the public were conscious of a good play in their midst. On Broadway it is hit or miss. There are no half-measures. I saw *Summer And Smoke* by Tennessee Williams, whose play *The Glass Menagerie* had been such a success with Laurette Taylor in the leading part. It was a very poor house, but the people obviously enjoyed the play and would certainly advise others to see it. But in America there is no time for leisurely word-of-mouth publicity, and so what might have grown into a success, suffered a premature death.

"Playing on Broadway is an exhilarating experience. It means facing a tough public, but it is a public generously disposed towards foreigners. They are always ready to enjoy a new theatrical experience and prepared to

(Continued on page 30)





The scene at Gravesend on the morning of 22nd January, on board the *Edith*, of London, when Michael Redgrave handed to the Mayor (Councillor E. E. Osborne) the plaque presented to Gravesend to commemorate Strindberg's visit. Freda Jackson is standing with Mr. Redgrave and Lilly Kahn is also in the picture.

## The Strindberg Centenary

**J**OHAN August Strindberg, the great Swedish author, was born on 22nd January 1849, and died in 1912. His influence on modern drama has been almost as great as Ibsen's, though many find his plays, with their characteristic pessimistic outlook and bitter hatred of women, difficult to understand. Much is explained, of course, by his own life, for he made three unhappy marriages which, with money difficulties and mental strain, reduced him almost to insanity. Strindberg wrote a large number of novels and poems in addition to his plays, the best known of which are *The Father* (1887), *Miss Julie* (1888) and *The Dance of Death* (1901).

Anthony Hawtreys production at the Embassy of Strindberg's *The Father*, which transferred to the Duchess, was a notable occasion, and it was in connection with this that a most interesting ceremony occurred at Gravesend.

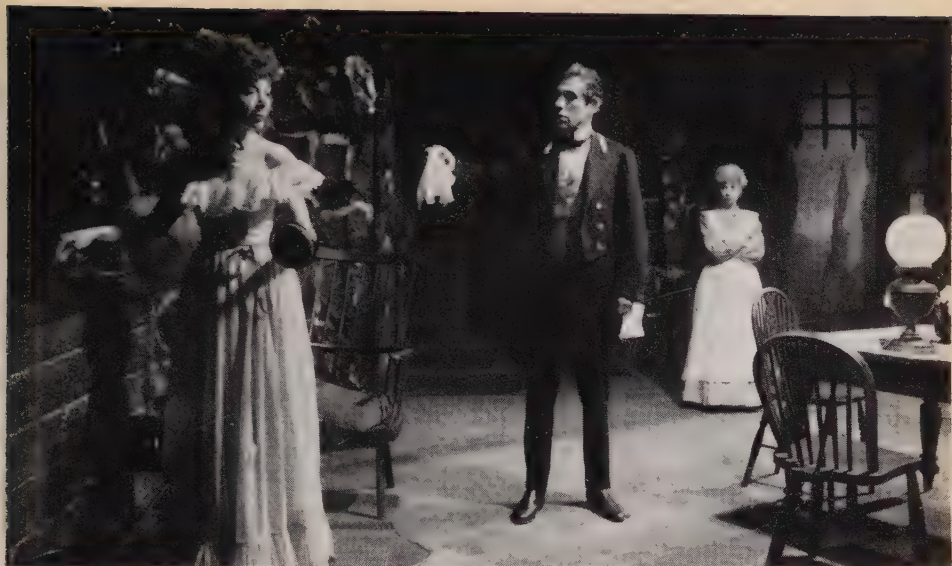
With a mist hanging over the river, completely obscuring visibility of the north bank, guests arrived on Saturday, 22nd January at Gravesend Town Hall, at the invitation of His Worship the Mayor (Councillor E. E. Osborne), to celebrate the centenary of the birth of August Strindberg, who, on the

occasion of his only visit to this country, stayed in the town.

Led by the Mayor and other civic officials the party made their way down the narrow street from the town hall to the town pier to await the arrival of Michael Redgrave, Freda Jackson, Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Hawtreys, who with the other members of the cast of *The Father*, were giving to Gravesend a plaque commemorating the Swedish writer's visit.

Shortly after 11.30 the *Edith*, of London, British Railways rivercraft, came through the blanket of mist and the sun shed a shaft of light on the scene as the passengers disembarked at the pier. Michael Redgrave handed over the plaque to the Mayor before making their way up the steps to the main hall. There on a wooden base, beneath a pillar hung with the blue and yellow flag of Sweden, Monsieur O. Lundberg, Swedish *Charge d'Affaire*, screwed the plaque permanently into position.

There, where Strindberg himself landed in the summer of 1893 to be met by his friend J. T. Grein, it will remain a perpetual reminder to all who pass that way of the great esteem in which we hold Sweden's greatest playwright.



THE PETER COTES COMPANY  
IN

## "Miss Julie"

AT THE LIBRARY THEATRE  
MANCHESTER

● To mark Strindberg's centenary a graceful tribute was paid in Manchester when Peter Cotes produced *Miss Julie* at the Library Theatre. In these scenes of a most memorable revival of a rarely performed play are, *above*, Joan Miller, Duncan Lamont and Ilona Ference; and *below*, Duncan Lamont and Joan Miller.







## “Oranges and Lemons”

● Scenes from the gay and witty Company of Four intimate revue, devised and directed by Laurier Lister. Originally seen at the Lyric, Hammersmith, *Oranges and Lemons* subsequently transferred to the Globe, where it is enjoying a well-deserved successful run, with Diana Churchill, Elisabeth Welch and Max Adrian at their brilliant best.

*Top:* The company in the colourful finale of the show.

*Above left:* Daphne Oxenford and Diana Churchill in “**The Sunday Sisters**,” an amusing skit on film critics.

*Left:* Diana Churchill, Max Adrian and Charlotte Mitchell in “**The Importance of Being Frank**,” which speaks for itself!



**"Quiet Honeymoon,"** a crazy, hilarious item, featuring *L. to R.:* Marjorie Dunkels, Angus Menzies, Daphne Peretz, Max Adrian, Brian Blades, John Heawood, Shirley Hall, Charlotte Mitchell, Elizabeth Cooper, Ann Lydekker and Sylvia Rye.

(Right):

**"Rainbow Nights"** in which Daphne Oxenford and Diana Churchill recall some happy times spent with the American G.I.s in the war.



(Right):

**"Snake in the Grass."** Elisabeth Welch and Max Adrian in one of the most sophisticated items of the revue.

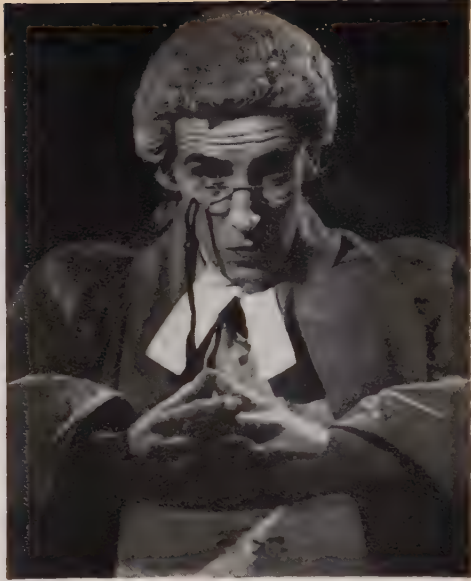


PICTURES BY  
ANGUS McBEAN





**"For Art's Sake."** Diana Churchill, Max Adrian and Elisabeth Welch as three statues in Battersea Park have some enlightening comments to make.



**"Cora,"** in which Max Adrian, as the Judge, gives a vivid description of a young lady's murder, but is most interested in the possibility of renting her flat.



**"Home Rails."** Max Adrian, Elizabeth Boyd, Brian Blades and Shirley Hall in another amusing item with a characteristic Emett setting.



KAY HAMMOND and JOHN CLEMENTS who are now on a prior-to-London tour of Farquhar's *The Beaux Stratagem*, with which Mr. Clements returns to actor-managership. Kay Hammond, his wife, is now happily completely recovered from a long illness.

(Portrait: Alexander Bender)

## In the News



ANGELA BADDELEY who will play the lead in Jacques Deval's new play *Wife of Thy Youth*, which Peter Mather is presenting shortly in the West End.

(Portrait: Swarbrick Studios)



ROSALYN BOULTER who is starring with Frank Lawton in *Summer in December*, a new comedy by James Liggat, presented by Milroy Gay, which opened at the Comedy on 22 Mar. (Portrait: Denis de Marney)

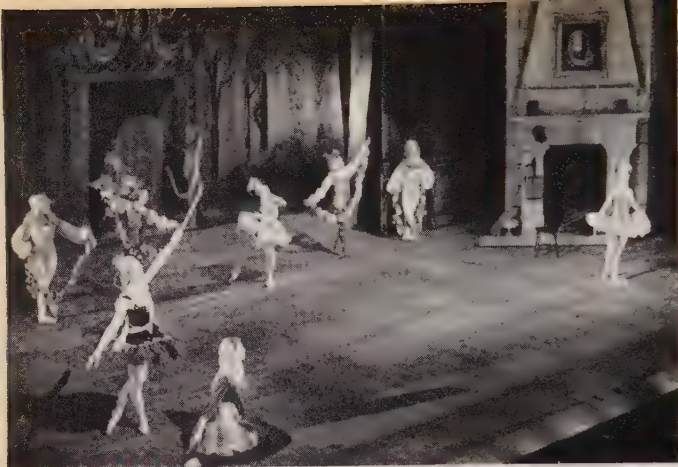


## “Cinderella”

● Scenes from Frederick Ashton's brilliantly successful new full length ballet to music by Prokofieff, which has been a sensation at Covent Garden this season. The role of Cinderella was specially devised by Mr. Ashton for Margot Fonteyn, but owing to an injury, Moira Shearer and Violetta Elvin were first seen in the part, though Margot Fonteyn deservedly received the biggest ovation of her career when she ultimately appeared in the title role. Frederick Ashton and Robert Helpmann are outstanding as the Ugly Sisters, and the costumes and scenery by Jean-Denis Malclès are another reason for the abiding delight of this lovely ballet version of the old fairy tale.

The pictures show, *top*, a moment from Act I during the dance of the seasons, with Pamela May as the Fairy Godmother and Moira Shearer as Cinderella in the foreground; *left*, the Ballroom scene in Act II, with Robert Helpmann and Frederick Ashton as the Ugly Sisters and Alexander Grant as the Jester, and *below*, the lovely final scene of the ballet.

PICTURES BY  
ROGER WOOD



# Whispers from the Wings

By  
LOOKER ON

ONE of the most successful post-war dramatists is Noel Langley, whose *Cage Me A Peacock*, *Little Lambs Eat Ivy* and *Edward, My Son*, written in collaboration with Robert Morley, have proved such popular box-office draws. In the near future we are promised two further plays from his pen, *Farm of Three Echoes* and *The Merry Month of May*. Yet this young South African playwright is most dissatisfied with the present-day state of the theatre. Being highly critical of the world in which he works and intolerant of anything but the best, he sees much in need of reform.

He is far from content with our stilted translations of the foreign classics—Ibsen, Strindberg, Chekhov, Ostrovsky and the rest. While recently in Stockholm for the Strindberg centenary celebrations, he saw a performance of *Miss Julie* in Swedish. Though not understanding a word of the language, he soon realised the play was written in a colloquial conversational style, thereby creating an impression rarely conveyed in versions performed on our stage. Dictionary translations are no good in the theatre. Apart from offering no scope to the actors, they make dull entertainment. Mr. Langley insists that the literal translation should be brought to life by a skilled playwright, whose job is to transpose it into the colloquial idiom of English speech. Only then will English playgoers be able to gain a fair conception of the original work.

By way of putting his theories into practice, Mr. Langley has adapted Chekhov's first play, *Ivanov*. It is a grim story of a neurotic intellectual, an unhappy marriage and a subsequent suicide. On its original production at Korsh's private theatre in Moscow, the play was not a success. According to Nemirovitch-Dantchenko, who founded the Moscow Art Theatre with Stanislavsky, Chekhov's writing required a new and particular theatrical approach, which neither the critics nor the actors appreciated. It was a play before its time. The terrific vitality of the work, with its highly emotional and passionate parts, appealed to Mr. Langley, who has also tried to convey the almost Shavian wit of the original dialogue.

Another regret expressed by this young dramatist is the shortage of producers in the West End. He feels a playwright has a right to expect someone better qualified than a frustrated actor to bring his work to life on the stage. The author should demand a producer with an expert knowledge of play construction, capable of assessing the value of such technicalities as cutting, tempo and lighting. He should be a man who knows the theatre from top to bottom, able to inspire confidence in all who work under



NOEL LANGLEY

(Portrait by Antony Beauchamp)

him. According to Mr. Langley, as there are only about three such men in London at the moment, playwrights have to queue up for their services. He himself has refused the production of more than one of his plays, rather than have them directed by a producer whose talents are not equal to the task.

Producers tend to ignore plays they have directed, as soon as the first night is over. The casts are allowed to become slovenly in their work, resulting in slipshod performances which are sometimes a disgrace to the West End stage. Yet no one seems to care, as long as people buy tickets at the box office. The present day back-stage irresponsibility contrasts with the conscientiousness existing in 1934 when Mr. Langley's first play, *Queer Cargo*, was produced at the Piccadilly, with such "sloggers" as Robert Hale, Barry Sinclair, Barrie Livesey, Raymond Lovell, Ballard Berkeley and Franklyn Dyall in the cast. What Mr. Langley calls sweat-hard work was commonplace in the theatre then, but today actors and producers think their work is easier than it really is.

Robert Morley is an actor for whom Mr. Langley has tremendous admiration, quite apart from the fact that they joined forces to write *Edward, My Son*. He feels that Morley gives the public something they want—big, broad, colourful, romantic acting which was once a familiar feature of the

(Continued overleaf)



English stage. He gives playgoers a breath of the glorious past that was ousted by the neat, confined theatre of the Nineteen-Thirties. If something of the old-time conventional theatre can be restored a new school of playwrights will rise to serve it and a new glory will follow this present period of lull and waiting. Being somewhat emotionally inarticulate in private life, English playgoers, so Mr. Langley feels, demand emotion in the theatre. Maybe he will give the public what they want in *Ivanov*, if he can find the right producer and the right actor to galvanise this Chekhov first-born into blazing life.

#### Tale of Two Cities (Contd.)

like every new European star. An ovation greets their first entrance but they are only retained if they give playgoers value for money. Though American audiences greet their artists so demonstratively, their welcome is somehow different from that of the warm-hearted English public.

"Young American actors do not get the same chance to develop as their English counterparts. A boy of talent in this country can learn his job in one of our many excellent repertory companies. He can play a whole variety of parts in public and thus learn to master his art under ideal conditions. There are no "reps" in America, so he sometimes has to make his mark on Broadway without sufficient experience. As soon as he manages to score a success and seems set for a triumphant stage career, he is snapped up by Hollywood, probably never to set foot on a stage again.

"American musical productions are well ahead of ours. Their standard of talent is amazingly high and a point is made of employing only the finest available writers and composers. Over here we seem content to go on turning out carbon copies of musical plays that delighted the Edwardians, but on Broadway they seek new forms and produce such enchanting entertainment as *Oklahoma!* That London appreciates these experiments is proved by the fact that *Oklahoma!* has run longer at Drury Lane than any other play on those historic boards.

"It is a pity that nothing like the Arts Council exists in America to give drama a helping hand. There is no reason why such an organisation offering subsidies should interfere with private enterprise. There is room for both in the theatre, existing side by side. Young dramatists like Tennessee Williams might stand a better chance of being heard if they could rely on the security offered by such a body as the Arts Council. It might even help me to realise one of my dearest ambitions—to play Shakespeare on Broadway with an English company of the first quality."

#### "Henry VIII"

THE 1949 annual production of the Marlowe Society at the Arts Theatre, Cambridge, has stolen a march on Tyrone Guthrie's *Henry VIII*, which will be the last item on the Festival programme at Stratford in July. Seldom if ever have there been two productions of the play in one year. Perhaps Wilson Knight's essay on it in *The Crown of Life* last year has had something to do with this welcome revival of interest.

Stratford will not easily surpass the magnificence of the Cambridge presentation. If the settings halved the depth of the stage they also provided admirable long approaches and exits, and discriminating use of the extended stage and excellent grouping enabled the large cast to manœuvre without confusion. A lavish range of handsome costumes feasted the eye and coloured a succession of striking stage pictures, culminating in a finely imaginative curtain—the people of London who had been wildly cheering the newly-christened infant Queen Elizabeth froze into an eternal moment while the poet himself spoke a brief epilogue.

The play's own life moves counter to this brilliant surface. Buckingham falls, Katharine is cast off, Wolsey is finally exposed, disgraced and converted to the humility he had professed. Only Henry, impossibly whitewashed, goes free. Did he really believe his marriage was invalid, or did he only want Anne? The poet is reticent, for obvious reasons, and the actor was also, though less defensibly, undecided. Perhaps he thought the founder of Trinity College ought to have the benefit of the doubt. Wolsey began unconvincingly but made enough of his conversion to earn an ovation. The anonymous cast included a delicious Lord Chancellor and a Lord Chamberlain not much less amusing.

But the younger actors reflected what is perhaps a shortcoming of academic disciplines. Everything was intelligently and rapidly pronounced, but the emotional stream behind the words was meagre and bodily movement often awkward. Norfolk opened well, but there was a thin half hour until the ladies had their chance. In the trial scene, Katharine—still underplaying by professional standards—kindled the theatre to a proper level of response, and she was followed by an Anne Bullen so lovely and accomplished as to deserve all the compliments the text bestows on her. Both ladies' movements, feelings and wits were in harmony. The gentle sex, one surmises, have deeper instinctive resistance to the cerebral culture of the colleges.

The young Earl of Surrey, however, contributed the strongest burst of passion.

ROY WALKER.

# Echoes from Broadway

BY OUR  
AMERICAN  
CORRESPONDENT

E.  
MAWBY  
GREEN

(Right):

Left to right: Mildred  
Dunnoch, Lee J. Cobb,  
Arthur Kennedy and  
Cameron Mitchell in a  
scene from *The Death of  
a Salesman* by Arthur  
Miller.



**I**N reviewing *The Heiress* for the *New York Times*, W. A. Darlington, writing from London, ended his article with, "If 1949 brings us a better play than this, it will be an outstanding year." The American reviewers as a whole, on the other hand, after giving adequate praise to *The Heiress'* undeniable virtues, undoubtedly ended up thinking, if not writing, "If 1948 doesn't bring us a better play than this, it will be a disappointing year." That seems to indicate the difference in attitude towards the drama in the two countries. The Americans can appreciate *The Heiress'* neat, old-fashioned story with its fine acting roles and polished dialogue and see that this type of drama gets a steady flow of patronage, but they also expect a theatrical season to unveil a drama that imaginatively expands their knowledge of the human heart and preferably after years of one set living room realism, that also imaginatively expands the confines of the stage. In recent years this need was met by Eugene O'Neill's *The Iceman Cometh* and Tennessee Williams' *The Glass Menagerie* and *A Streetcar Named Desire* and now, this season, by Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*, which Kermit Bloomgarden and Walter Fried have produced.

Mr. Miller, whose *All My Sons* won the New York Drama Critics' Award two years ago, has stunned everybody with the startling development of his talent, and his *Death of a Salesman* has been greeted by press and

public with an enthusiasm that seems almost unbelievable. The tussle for tickets, the unending line at the box office, the consistent raving word-of-mouth comments are absolutely phenomenal for this unrelieved tragedy, which nightly sees a portion of its audience emotionally break down into fits of sobbing.

With both psychological and sociological accuracy and rare dramatic power, Mr. Miller lays bare the soul of Willie Loman, travelling salesman, who, at the age of 63, is suddenly through—no longer able to earn a living at his job; bewildered by the failure of the son he had pinned his hopes on, but yet refusing to acknowledge this failure and clinging desperately to the illusions he has built his life on: that being a "good guy" and well-liked by everybody is all that is necessary for success in this world. Through a series of flashbacks, brought on by the old man's newly acquired habit of muttering to himself, the fateful mistakes of his life are gradually revealed, until the climax is reached, when his son forces him to face reality; wipes away all his illusions, and shows them both for the pitiful failures that they are. Then, following the same philosophy that Eugene O'Neill expressed in *The Iceman Cometh*—that man cannot live without his illusions about himself—Willie Loman commits suicide.

Not only does *Death of a Salesman* bear this resemblance to *The Iceman Cometh*, but it seems to this observer to be even more



## Echoes from Broadway (Contd.)

indebted to *A Streetcar Named Desire* for its very existence. We sincerely doubt whether it ever would have been written if Tennessee Williams had not set up the pattern. Both plays pick up their hero (in Mr. Williams' case, heroine, Blanche DuBois) at the same point in their lives — an emotional and psychological impasse that is leading them to destruction. Both even make their first entrances carrying suitcases, indicating they have made their last trip and have reached the final stage in their duel with destiny. Both authors then start probing into the lives of their respective "guinea pigs," giving out little pieces of the cause of their dilemma until they reach the main artery, Blanche's feeling of guilt that she caused her young, unhappy husband to kill himself, when she should have tried to help him, and Willie Loman's knowledge that he has lost his son's admiration and respect and snapped the over-strong bond between them, when he is caught by his high school boy son in a Boston hotel room (in accredited travelling salesman fashion) with a woman that is not his mother. Then, after this basic revelation, both authors reach their smashing climax—Blanche DuBois' flight from reality to insanity, finally forged by her realist brother-in-law, who, after showing her for what she really is, rapes her; and Willie Loman's aforementioned loss of his illusions when his son savagely shows him for what they really are, and his subsequent suicide.

But these two young authors who are writing better than anybody else for the American stage, also have their differences. Mr. Williams' characters and backgrounds are stranger, more exotic, than Mr. Miller's next door neighbour environment, and his poetic prose style more suited to his play's content and form than Mr. Miller's gift for naturalism which occasionally leads him to ponderousness and a certain awkwardness in some of the flashback sequences.

But these minor flaws in no way affect the over-all power of *Death of a Salesman*. It is an extraordinarily fine drama, extraordinarily well acted by Lee J. Cobb as the salesman, Arthur Kennedy as his son, and Mildred Dunnock as his wife, and with a script of such stature at his disposal, Elia Kazan could not resist directing it, which left Jo Mielziner with no alternative but to design the setting and both these top talented artists have repeated their *Streetcar Named Desire* mood matching triumph.

Clifford Odets, the depression's Arthur Miller, returned to Broadway after eleven years in Hollywood with a bitter attack on the celluloid capital called *The Big Knife*, which once again proved his talent for writing intense individual scenes, vivid dialogue, and his weakness in parlaying these assets into a complete dramatic winner. His theme is flamboyantly melodramatic, as it

was in *Golden Boy*, but somehow he still manages to create the impression it's all in the realm of probability.

This time Mr. Odets is telling of a fabulous film star, Charlie Castle (expertly played by John Garfield) who is blackmailed by the head of his studio into signing a three million dollar fourteen year contract against his wishes. (At this point it should be noted that most New Yorkers facetiously thought that was very respectable compensation for the loss of a wife and artistic integrity.) However, the blackmail tool—Charlie was in an automobile accident; ran someone down, and allowed the studio press agent to go to jail for him—gets out of hand, when a film extra who was in the car with Charlie at the time of the accident threatens to talk, and the studio to protect their huge financial investment in Charlie, plots her murder. This naturally outrages the star, but with his hands tied and the knowledge of the mess he has made of his life, commits suicide.

Flamboyant and far-fetched? Yes, but it seems to us Mr. Odets could have pulled it off, if he had picked up Charlie a little earlier in his career—when he still had his ideals, and showed how Hollywood stripped him of them one by one. As it is, when we first meet Charlie he has already allowed another man to go to jail for him; he is a heavy drinker and a lecher; in plain American words a "heel," and it is pretty impossible for the audience to have any of the necessary feelings of sympathy for him.

However, with the attractive box office advance garnered from the Garfield film following, *The Big Knife* should be able to cut itself a place on Broadway for awhile, and audiences will relish not only the star's fine performance but also the supporting ones of J. Edward Bromberg as the movie mogul monster producer and Nancy Kelly as Charlie's emotionally mangled wife.

Two more picture names to return to Broadway are Melvyn Douglas and Paul Muni. Mr. Douglas is appearing in a farce, *Two Blind Mice*, by Samuel Spewack, and Mr. Muni in a revival of Sidney Howard's 1924 Pulitzer Prize drama, *They Knew What They Wanted*, and both are victims of mixed notices.

Mr. Douglas in *Two Blind Mice* is attractive and breezy as a newspaperman who gets involved with Washington bureaucracy and eventually the Army, Navy and Air Corps through two old ladies who, through a clerical oversight, are still running the abolished Office of Seeds and Standards. It is an amusing idea but never quite sturdy enough to unloose all the laughs expected of a Broadway comedy smash.

Mr. Muni, on the other hand, is too heavy handed, too studied in his delineation of the warm-hearted Italian Tony, to bring the late Mr. Howard's substantial drama to life. And

(Continued on page 36)

# The Season's Ballet

**T**HOUGH only three months have passed, 1949 looks like being a vintage year, as far as ballet is concerned. Already we have seen Roland Petit's two masterpieces, *Carmen* and *Les Demeiselles de la Nuit*; Fonteyn in *Cinderella*; Danilova in *Coppélia* and Markova and Dolin in the first large-scale dance recital attempted in this country. Ballet continues to be a box office attraction, with the Sadler's Wells Company regularly selling out Covent Garden, and even paying its way. In the provinces and in Greater London the International Ballet packs the largest super-cinemas to see full-length versions of the classics.

In the early days of the New Year Markova and Dolin flew over from America to give five dance recitals at the Empress Hall, an occasion which drew more than 30,000 people and has encouraged them to return to Harringay Stadium in August. Supported by a locally recruited corps de ballet and accompanied by the Philharmonia Orchestra under the direction of Muir Mathieson, these superlatively polished artists performed in a pool of dazzling light. In the centre of the otherwise darkened arena, the dancers took on a strange unearthly beauty to which distance lent a new enchantment. In a dress of icing pink and glittering stars Markova made a superb Sugar Plum Fairy, to the debonair Nutcracker Prince of Dolin. Markova's deeply moving Dying Swan created a beauty almost too intense to bear. The purists complained that such an experiment dragged ballet down to the vulgar level of the circus. A little over fifty years ago people were deploring

Henry J. Wood's attempt to make music accessible to the masses with his Queen's Hall Promenade Concerts, but now he has become a national hero, instanced as a pioneer of culture. In time, the same, may easily be said of Markova and Dolin, who should be thanked for having had the courage to tackle so gigantic an undertaking. Though the ballet public has undoubtedly increased in number since this popular Empress Hall conquest, certain aspects of these ballet recitals call for attention. It is to be hoped that the mechanical amplification of the music will be free from distortion and duplication when they next appear, and maybe an expert in decor can be persuaded to design a stage setting that will look less like the entrance to a homes-and-gardens exhibition.

Frederick Ashton's *Cinderella*, the first three-act ballet to be devised by an English choreographer in the classical style, must have broken every existing box office record for ballet in this country. It is an ideal story for balletic treatment and offers unrivalled scope to the prima ballerina. She unfolds her story entirely in dance form, in contrast to so many of the older ballets where the heroine alternates between dance and mime, though neither sequence bears much relation to the other. Ashton has arranged dances which enable artists to express emotion, while still creating beauty of line. The choreographer clings closely to the story, which is never shelved to permit the company to show off their technical tricks in a series of divertissements. The vast Covent

(Continued overleaf)



Margot Fonteyn as Giselle in the mad scene. Robert Helpmann is appearing in *Giselle* with Fonteyn in the current season at Covent Garden, and in *Apparitions*, which was revived on 24th March.



Garden stage is used to its fullest extent in the dramatic ballroom scene, with its exciting finale, as Cinderella fights her way through the revellers when the clock strikes midnight.

Three ballerinas have so far danced the title-role. It should have been created by Margot Fonteyn just before Christmas, but as she met with an accident which incapacitated her for two months, Moira Shearer was given the honour of dancing the first performance. Certainly no dancer could be lovelier to look upon, as she charmed her dream prince. Violetta Elvin was the second Cinderella, rather less ethereal than her predecessor, and on that account able to suggest the domestic side of the story rather more convincingly. Miss Fonteyn met with an ovation which brought tears to her eyes when she finally took over the part in February. Here was a warm human heroine as well as a superlative dancer, whose art could express every aspect of the character. With heart-breaking pathos she recalled past happy days when her mother made the house a real home. Miss Fonteyn is the answer to the prayer of every child who goes to see Cinderella brought to life on the stage. As the Ugly Sisters, Robert Helpmann and Frederick Ashton revelled in a riot of balletic horseplay and proved themselves magnificent clowns, able to express the most complicated situations without the aid of the spoken word. Helpmann, as the bullying sister, strangely resembled Minnie Mouse, while our hearts went out to Ashton as the bewildered henpecked sister with the sugar-loaf coiffure and the gargoyle nose. A fleeting joy of the evening is Beryl Grey's imperiously lovely Fairy Winter.

Roland Petit's Ballets de Paris season at



ROLAND PETIT

Princes drew the town to see the world première of his *Carmen*. M. Petit has stripped the story of all the conventional theatrical trappings. There are no grand opera gipsies with red heels and even redder roses between their teeth. Renée Jeanmaire, as *Carmen*, has the pale face of one who never sees sunlight and the tousled head of a mischievous schoolboy, but she loves with an intensity rarely permitted on the English stage. Her daringly expressive *pas de deux* to M. Petit's Don Jose, in the squalid bedroom scene, speaks volumes that could never be written, and quickens the pulse of the audience in the most astonishing manner. The death scene outside the bull-ring, danced to maddening drum beats, as love-turned-to-hate seeks revenge in violence, brings down the curtain on a house stunned by the vigour and audacity of the dancing.

The other outstanding success of the Ballets de Paris season was M. Petit's *Les Demoiselles de la Nuit*, which Margot Fonteyn created in Paris last year. At Princes it was superbly danced by Colette Marchand. To highly effective music by Jean Francaix, she appears as the white kitten who becomes a human being to share the love of a young musician. But the call of the blood is too strong and when she hears her former friends miaowing on the roof at night, she has to escape through a dormer window to join them. The dramatic last scene is perilously danced on a steeply sloping stage to suggest the roof.

(Continued on page 36)



A scene from Ballets Nègres' popular work, *Aggrey*.



### SHEILA BURRELL

who has made a big impression in *Dark of the Moon*, which transfers to the Ambassadors on 12th April, following its outstanding success at the Lyric, Hammersmith. Peter Brook has produced brilliantly this most unusual fantasy, based on the ballad of Barbara Allen by Howard Richardson and William Berney.

(Portrait: Anthony Buckley)



### JUDY CAMPBELL

stars in Daphne Rye's production of *Royal Highness*, adapted from a play by Felix Salten, which The Company of Four are presenting at the Lyric, Hammersmith, following *Dark of the Moon*. *Royal Highness*, an historical romance, was banned before the war, because of the too recent occurrence of the events portrayed.

(Portrait: Vivienne)



### JOYCE BARBOUR

who has taken over the role of Miss Whitchurch from Margaret Rutherford in *The Happiest Days of Your Life*, now past its 400th performance at the Apollo.

(Portrait: Vivienne)



### MARGARET LOCKWOOD

returning to the theatre after twelve years, stars in Noel Coward's *Private Lives*, presented by Henry Sherek, which opens at Southsea prior to a fourteen weeks' provincial tour.

(Portrait: Anthony Beauchamp)





Moirá Sneider as Cinderella and Franklin White as the Father in Ashton's *Cinderella*.

### The Season's Ballet (Contd.)

tops. The masterly choreography has captured some cunningly feline movements and admirably tells the story of a romance that fails because it should never have happened.

Berto Pasuka's troupe of negro dancers—Les Ballets Nègres—gave a short season at the People's Palace last month in between two foreign tours. For the first time in London they performed *De Bride Cry*, a dance-comedy of the cotton plantations. A showy wedding means everything in the negro peasant communities, and as so many young people are practically penniless at the time they wish to marry, they postpone the wedding until they have sufficient money to "do it in style." Meantime they live together as man and wife. The latest Pasuka ballet amusingly depicts a wedding taking place twenty years after a happy pair had decided to share life, for better or for worse, and so their children are guests at the wedding. The early romance of the cotton fields is expressed with graceful bashfulness by Marjorie Blackman and Tony Johnson. Roy Carr's deep consciousness of the simple humour in every-day happenings enables him to reap a rich harvest of laugh-

ter from his mime-study of the child with the flower and a sense of curiosity.

Last month the Sadler's Wells Ballet invited Alexandra Danilova to Covent Garden for a series of guest performances that became a succession of gala nights. Re-appearing in London after an absence of ten years, this bewitching ballerina proved as spell-binding as ever. The old adorners found her magic undimmed by the years, and the youngsters discovered artistry beyond their dreams. Danilova is a phenomenal ballerina, such as comes but once or twice a century. Her technique has long been perfected and forgotten. She creates a living character out of a few steps, as easily as the consummate actress makes a flesh and blood being out of a few simple lines of dialogue. Apart from the superb assurance and beauty of line, a pout from those rosebud lips or a shrug of that eloquent shoulder is enough to enslave us for life. Her bubbling sense of fun brought a purring contentment from the audience, who marvelled at the manner in which this supreme artist infected the rest of the company with her enthusiasm. Such mature dancers as Beryl Grey and Robert Helpmann excelled themselves in old familiar parts. Frederick Franklin, who has come over from America to partner Danilova, became a new idol for balletomanes overnight. E.J.

### Echoes from Broadway (Contd.)

in the role of Amy, the mail order bride, Carol Stone is in the unfortunate position of having to stand comparison with one of the American theatre's great performances, that given by Pauline Lord in the original production. We thought Miss Stone played exceedingly well, with the proper strength and tenderness, but apparently from the wealth of detail Miss Lord's admirers have supplied us with, she only partially recreated this famous role.

This month's unsuccessful contenders included the Theatre Guild's production of Philip Barry's *My Name is Aquilon*, which was based on Jean Pierre Aumont's *L'Empereur de Chine*, and co-starred M. Aumont with the lovely Lilli Palmer; and a cut up version of Shakespeare's *Richard III* which starred a very competent featured actor, Richard Whorf.

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# The International Theatre Institute

by JAMES AUDSLEY

**F**OLLOWING the formation of U.N.O., the appearance of U.N.E.S.C.O. was greeted with enthusiasm as a welcome sign that, in the world of international affairs, the entertainments and spare-time activities of the various peoples were not to be completely lost sight of in the welter of economic and political discussion. But spare-time activities constitute a sizeable field of endeavour, and it seemed unlikely that even a special foundation such as U.N.E.S.C.O. could do it justice, and take care of educational and scientific questions as well U.N.E.S.C.O., however, proved to be only the start. Various Sub-Commissions were formed, and, out of these, came other, more specialist organisations. One of the Sub-Commissions was that dealing with Art and Letters, and, from this, sprang a body designed to look after one of the most popular and most genuinely international of all the arts — the International Theatre Institute.

Despite its dependence on language, the international character of the Drama has been evident from its earliest days. Shakespeare and his contemporaries owed something to the French and Italian theatres; and almost every subsequent theatrical development in any country has caused intense interest, often followed by emulation and further development, in other countries. Great plays have been, and are today, popular in translation; and great players are welcomed abroad, even when acting in their own language. Comparatively recent happenings such as the visit of the Comédie Française to Denmark and to this country and the successes of the Arts Theatre Company in Prague and other European cities show that not even the present economic and travelling difficulties can stop those who are determined to make their theatrical ventures international.

This being so, a body designed to encourage these international ventures, and to use its influence for smoothing away difficulties, must, surely, be welcomed by people in the theatre and by people interested in the theatre. As yet, however, surprisingly few people seem to know anything about the International Theatre Institute.

Great Britain, the United States and France were all represented on the Art and Letters Sub-Commission, which was the I.T.I.'s direct parent; and to these three countries must go much of the credit for bringing the new organisation into being. The British delegate, incidentally, was Mr. J. B. Priestley; and those who know something of his work and interests will not be surprised to hear that he was one of the most enthusiastic supporters of the idea.

The I.T.I. came into being at a Congress in Prague in July last year, as an offshoot of U.N.E.S.C.O.; and it became an entirely independent body as from 1st January this year. The reason for this change of status was not merely to ease U.N.E.S.C.O.'s burden: it went deeper than that. There are countries not in membership with U.N.E.S.C.O. which are very active theatrically. Now that the I.T.I. is a separate body, these might well join it, and the Institute might thus serve the cause of international relations in a wider sphere than is its normal concern. There are fourteen countries in membership at the moment; but there may soon be as many as eight or ten additions.

So much for the I.T.I.'s beginnings. Its main objects are the encouragement of all kinds of international theatrical activity, the easing of difficulties where these exist, and the spreading of news of developments in any member country to all the other member countries.

The Institute works through the National Centres which have been established in all the member nations; and here, at the very outset, countries like Great Britain struck a snag. With some nations, the theatre is a national institution, and the setting up and staffing of the National Centre was a government responsibility. Here, that is not, of course, the case. The British Government might encourage the venture, but the British Centre staff would not be government servants, and government funds would not be available. These difficulties, however, were overcome. The Arts Council and the British Council each made grants; and these sufficed for the establishment of an office and the employment of one secretary, this being Mr. Kenneth Rae. For the rest, the work is done by correspondents all over the country, who, as far as the I.T.I. is concerned, are unpaid. In reality, they are not; for they are mostly dramatic critics of local or professional papers, who are sufficiently enthusiastic about the theatre to do voluntarily the small amount of work over and above their normal duties necessitated by the I.T.I. requirements.

The dissemination of news is done by the publication in English and French of a *Bulletin*, which appears eight times a year. This, of course, is compiled from information received from the National Centres; and it consists of such things as synopses of new plays, with a critical summary of their first presentation: critical summaries of new productions of classic works: news of new developments in production methods: and details of new technical inventions. The first issue of this *Bulletin* was before the Execu-

(Continued on next page)





## Beauty Notes

(Left):  
The Goya  
"Thick and Thin"

### "Thick and Thin"

A new adaptation of the pencil type lipstick is cute and attractive as well as being practical, the thin neat gold ridged case contains the pencil lipstick, which has a much harder texture than normal and a thin point ideal for shaping. Attached by a thin gold chain is its rather fatter brother the container of which is identical in every other way, but the lipstick is finer and softer for filling in the lips. Available in all shades in the Goya range, "Thick and Thin" lipstick will be in the shops by the end of May. Another amusing feature is the incorporation in the flavour of the minutest trace of a special Swiss fondant.

## The Grace of Actresses

Theatre-goers, of both sexes, must often give a thought to the grace and beauty of actresses, dancers or ballerinas; and many a feminine mind has explored the possibilities of attaining such perfection of figure and carriage.

Elizabeth Arden Beauty Salon in the West End of London have many famous names on their list of clients and they are fitted and prepared to weigh and measure any woman and advise as the best way to reduce unsightly bulges or eradicate faults of posture. For each problem treatment varies, and methods range from wax baths to the giant roller. Gentle rhythmic exercises are recommended in many cases and the course is really delightful.

### "Smart Party" Perfume

A novel presentation of perfume is a small spiral flacon mounted into a miniature picture of a party. It makes a very attractive little gift, and retails at only 2/-. The perfumer, Peter Claridge, is an Englishman who worked for twelve years in one of the great French perfume manufacturing houses until last year when an English company was formed around him. The perfume does justice to his experience and its presentation to his imagination.



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**The International Theatre Institute** (*Contd.*)  
tive Committee when it met in Paris last December.

The Institute is also establishing a Documentation Centre at which details of new theatrical architecture and of new technical devices will be available. Another major object is the easing of difficulties in the way of acting companies wishing to travel abroad by bringing about some relaxation of stringent regulations in the name of international goodwill. Still another future intention is the establishment of scholarships to enable promising youngsters to visit other nations to study developments at first hand.

The present Chairman of the Executive Committee is Mr. Llewellyn Rees, who took over when the original choice, M. Armand Salacrou, the French playwright, had to resign. The next Congress will take place in Paris in June. The ideas behind the I.T.I. are admirable. The Institute, having overcome its initial difficulties, is still growing; and its progress must be of interest to all theatre-lovers.

**CARAVANS.**—Inspect the largest Northern display, all 1949. Raven Mignon, £298; Countryside Cub, £338; Eccles Active, £387; Eccles Enterprise, £497; Woodley, 17½ ft. (oak), £525; Raven Arcadian, £590; Cruis-Alon, residential, 17½ ft., £598, and many others. H.P. terms.—Staffords (Est. 25 years), Kirkheaton, Huddersfield. Always open.

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# Amateur Stage

LAST summer the London County Council essayed an open-air entertainment at Finsbury Park which, thanks to atrocious weather and some adverse publicity, achieved a thumping loss, although it had the advantage of professional leads.

This summer, from 6th June to 2nd July, the L.C.C. are to attempt another open-air entertainment at Finsbury Park, but this time they are pursuing another policy which calls upon amateur skill.

Entitled the Finsbury Park Open Air Festival of Light Opera, the programme will consist of repetitions by leading London musical societies of productions they have

**BEDFORD AND LUTON.—THE ROYAL COUNTY THEATRE, BEDFORD** (with properties adjoining in the main Midland Road), and **THE GRAND THEATRE, LUTON**, both well appointed FREEHOLD Theatres, will be offered for Sale by Auction on **THURSDAY 7th APRIL, IN THE HANOVER SQUARE ESTATE ROOM at 2.30 p.m.** (unless previously sold privately). Vacant Possession of the Theatres will be given on completion of the sales, and furnishings included. The Royal County Theatre has a seating capacity of 700 and the Grand Theatre 780. Both have excellent Stage and Dressing Room accommodation together with fully licensed Bars. The whole of the Bedford properties form a compact corner Block including Assembly Rooms, Shop property, etc., which not only allow for future extension of the Royal County Theatre, but meantime produce a Gross Income of about £820 per annum. Particulars and Conditions of Sale from the Joint Auctioneers:—Messrs. W. H. Peacock, 6 Dame Alice Street, Bedford, and Messrs. Knight, Frank & Rutley, 20 Hanover Sq., London, W.1.

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**FOR SALE.—Theatre World, Sept. 1943 to Jan. 1949** complete. Good condition.—Offers to: Box 342.

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staged during the current season. The full bill is not quite complete at this writing, but these are firm bookings:—

6th-8th June, Hornsey O.S. in *Merrie England*.

10th-11th June, Stock Exchange O.D.S. in *Beggars' Opera*.

13th-15th June, Baltic O.S. in *Student Prince*.

17th-18th June, Muswell Hill O.S. in *Tom Jones*.

20th-22nd June, Ilford O.S. in *Desert Song*.

24th-25th June, open.

27th-29th June, London Transport O.D.S. in *Tulip Time*.

1st-2nd July, open.

It remains to be seen what is the pulling power of these amateur groups, but all will wish them better luck with the weather than last year's Finsbury fiasco. In deciding on this policy the L.C.C. has adopted the settled practice of Scarborough open-air theatre, where local amateurs have for a number of years provided summer entertainment. This year they offer T. C. Fairbairn's production of *Robin Hood*.

\* \* \*

Obey's modern miracle play *The Hopeful Travellers* was well received on its first English production at Tavistock Little Theatre, London, in March.

Two March productions at the Fortune showed reasonable standards of amateur work—Staples Press D.S. showing good timing and weak accents in *George and Margaret*; Midland Bank D.S. holding good tension in *Children In Uniform*.

The Students' Repertory Club of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama are to stage Priestley's *Johnson Over Jordan* on 31st March-2nd April, when the author may be present at one production.

The Playhouse, Shaw, Lancs., will house a production of *The Mystery of the Marie Celeste*, by L. du Garde Peach, on 31st March-9th April. Crompton Stage Society will stage it.

The Arts Council held a regional conference in Nottingham on 18th-19th March, drawing its attendance from many theatreless towns in seven adjacent counties.

First amateur performance in Britain of Fodor's *The Vigil* was given by Reading Abbey Players in March.

Middlesbrough Little Theatre continues its busy programme, with varied activities, including music and dancing circles, and drama courses. Their March production was *The Distaff Side*.

A paper was read by Professor H. B. Dunncliff at the East India Association in March on Simla Amateur Dramatic Club. This world-famous group shows origins as far back as 1837, but it was first formally

(Continued overleaf)



# Shakespeare in Oslo

by GILLIAN HOLTBY

**T**HIS title outside the Norske Teatret met the eyes of a party of four young people on their first holiday abroad. A dash was made for the box office, seats were booked and at 19.30 hours they were seated in a well planned theatre trying to translate the programme with the aid of a dictionary and half the delighted gallery.

The performance was to be given in "Landsmal," the literary language of Norway, quite distinct from "Riksmal," the everyday language of speech, newspapers and novels.

Landsmal (approximate to old Norse) is preserved now only in certain theatres, books and radio programmes. The difference was evident (even to ears entirely ignorant of both), the deeper vowel sounds of the old language proving pleasanter to English ears than the lighter vowels of Riksmal.

The curtains swirled apart and we were in the courtyard of Theseus' palace. Through an archway shadows of dancing figures wavered in the warm lamplight, but out under the moon all was still and cold. When the royal pair finally withdrew to the merry making, curtains screened the arch, and the lovers seemed already enfolded in the mysterious world brooding in the shadows. The scene changed in a short blackout, the continuity preserved by the distant singing of Flute and his troupe as they tramped to their meeting place, and as the chorus swelled to its finale the lights went up on the wood near Athens. But Athens seemed very far away from the fantasy of the mountain revealed on the revolving stage. Caves

and crooked trees, exotic flowers, and distorted boulders provided ever changing settings for the shifting scenes, while cleverly timed movement on the stage allowed full scope to Helena's pathetic pursuit and Puck's "I will lead you up and down." But it was not until the awakening of Hermia from her serpent nightmare, that the extent to which living people provided the setting, became apparent. Trees and plants swayed to catch her, boulders shifted their menacing outline and horror overwhelmed her. In fact, the production of the whole play took the attitude of a faery world chance-visited, than of elfin meddling into human regions. Oberon, antlered like the white stag of Norwegian folklore, dominated a wild court of animals, satyrs and mountain trolls, whose Dionysian revels with Titania's train were only suspended on the entrance of the lovers, when they sank no further than the shadows, watching and waiting.

How the audience adored Bottom! In the only really "earthbound" sequence in the production, the Play, every line told. A very self-confident performance this. Flute had even scrounged the village brass band and a little portable tent for Thisbe's tiring room, but with the last impudent toss of her flaxen plait, the faery world again engulfed the stage, freezing the court into an enchanted tableau for the inspection of a curious Puck and his woodland rabble.

It was nearly over, but there was yet Studio Teatret, where young disciples of Stanislavsky were giving Maxwell Anderson's *Winterset*.

## Amateur Stage (Contd.)

constituted in 1888. Now management of the club has passed to Indian control.

Chatham Co-operative Players give Shaw's *Pygmalion* on 12th-13th April, and Mautham's *Sacred Flame* in early June.

*Grand National Night* was the choice of Four Seasons Theatre Club, Lewisham, in March.

Since its formation in 1941, Walthamstow Settlement Shakespeare Group have performed ten of Shakespeare's plays, some of which have been revived two and even three times. For their eleventh play the Group have chosen *Henry VI, Part II*, which will be presented from 4th-9th April. This production has been entered for the Essex Adult Drama Festival. *Julius Caesar* will be given in the open air some time in July.

Farquhar's *The Beaux' Stratagem* is not a frequent choice of amateurs, but on its merits it deserves staging. The Old Alleynian D.O.S. chose it for their thirtieth production at Cripplegate in March, and the result was

a credit to Cecil Holloway's direction and to the general acting of the company.

It is very refreshing to see amateurs putting some forthright attack into their acting, not afraid to depict the characters drawn by the dramatist. This demands ability and usually experience, which is where a professional may be expected to leave the amateur standing, but the Old Alleynians are very fortunate in calling upon players either with much experience or with that touch of ability which can proclaim itself at once.

Amongst the credits must go recognition of Charles Izod's attractive décor; a happy sense of timing in dialogue which so often secured the laugh instead of missing it; very good all-round casting, with each principal pulling full weight in the team work. The swordsmanship was not quite convincing, and there were some lines lost through speaking during laughter.

A pleasant evening, and not a few in the audience should be interested in comparing it with the forthcoming professional production.



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